



Connecticut Department of  
**ENERGY &  
ENVIRONMENTAL  
PROTECTION**

**STATE OF CONNECTICUT  
DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION**

Public Hearing – March 11, 2016  
Environment Committee

Testimony Submitted by Commissioner Robert J. Klee

**House Bill No. 5579 – AN ACT CONCERNING BUILDING RESILIENCY AND THE GOVERNOR’S COUNCIL ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony regarding **House Bill No. 5579 – An Act Concerning Building Resiliency and the Governor’s Council on Climate Change**. The Department of Energy and Environmental Protection (DEEP) has concerns about the proposal and welcomes the opportunity to offer the following testimony.

Sections 1 and 2 of H.B. 5579 address the need to ensure that Connecticut’s Building Code incorporates requirements that further the resilience of built structures to the increasing wind and flood risks posed by a changing climate. DEEP, in conjunction with the Department of Insurance has been working with the Department of Administrative Services and the State Building Inspector to ensure that revisions to the state building code embrace more stringent standards to mitigate flood and wind damage. DEEP strongly supports the goals of these sections, and are collaboratively exploring ways to achieve those goals without the need for statutory changes. We look forward to working with the committee and our sister agencies to ensure that the next revision of the code includes appropriately resilient building standards as investments upfront can dramatically reduce the likelihood or extent – and therefore cost - of wind or flood damage.

With regard to section 3 of the bill, the committee is aware that on Earth Day last year, Governor Malloy issued Executive Order 46 establishing the Governor’s Council on Climate Change (GC3). The GC3’s is tasked with “examining the efficacy of existing policies and regulations designed to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and identifying new strategies to meet the established emission reduction targets.” Specifically, the Council is to:

- establish interim goals that, if met, will ensure that the state will achieve the 2050 target;
- monitor greenhouse gas emission levels in Connecticut annually to determine whether the state is poised to meet the interim goals and the 2050 target; and
- recommend policies, regulations, or legislative actions that will assist in achieving the interim goals and 2050 target.

Since its first meeting on July 10, 2015, the Council has achieved the following: established a reference case for investigating emission-reduction measures and strategies; developed a series of recommendations for

voluntary action among state agencies, municipalities, businesses, labor groups, environmental groups, and non-profits; and developed a short and long-term stakeholder engagement strategy.

In 2016 the Council, with support from the Northeast States for Coordinated Air Use Management, will assess the merits of various technologies and measures to develop recommendations for an interim target and a corresponding suite of policies and programs to meet the recommended target. These recommendations will be incorporated into a comprehensive climate change strategy to be released in late 2016.

H.B. Bill No. 5579 requires the determination of a statewide emission reduction target for 2030 by July 1, 2016. Adopting a target prior to the completion of the full analysis completed by the GC3 undermines the Council's process. It is important that the GC3 be allowed the necessary time to investigate and discuss various mitigation scenarios prior to making a recommendation on a mid-term GHG reduction target. As such, DEEP believes that setting a statewide GHG emission reduction target by July 1, 2016 is premature.

H.B. Bill No. 5579 also calls for the reporting of greenhouse gas emissions by state agencies every three years, including an explanation of any increase or decrease since the previous report. DEEP recommends that state agencies lead by example by establishing tracking systems to inventory their greenhouse gas emissions and to identify opportunities and strategies for emissions reductions, however, the requirement of such action may be premature. We need to identify a uniform mechanism for tracking the GHG emissions of state agencies that minimizes the fiscal impact of administering said GHG inventories. A program such as this can be explored by the GC3 during its current efforts to identify strategies to reduce statewide greenhouse gas emissions.

It should also be further noted that in accordance with state law, Section 16a-37u of the general statutes, energy consumption in state owned and leased buildings will be reduced by at least 20% by 2018 from 2010 levels. The state is on track to meet this goal through various measures and approaches. In order to quantify goal achievement the state is gathering relevant information, analyzing the available data, and identifying and prioritizing energy saving opportunities. DEEP is concurrently working to implement both short- and long-term projects that reduce energy consumption.

In summary, DEEP recommends utilizing the GC3 process, and the analytical work currently under development, to inform the dialogue on an appropriate interim target for Connecticut and strongly recommends that the GC3 further explore making recommendations on how best to develop standardized reporting of greenhouse gas emission by each state agency.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony on this proposal. If you should require any additional information, please contact Robert LaFrance, DEEP's Director of Governmental Affairs, at 860.424.3401 or [Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov](mailto:Robert.LaFrance@ct.gov) or, Elizabeth McAuliffe, DEEP Legislative Liaison, at 860.424.3458 or [Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.McAuliffe@ct.gov).